

# Peel Project Pick Slip

Peel ID: **N020999**

*For: University of Alberta*

Title

**Red Deer River irrigation development - East Central Irrigation Association**

*Instructions:*

Catalogue? **y**

Location: **UABARD**

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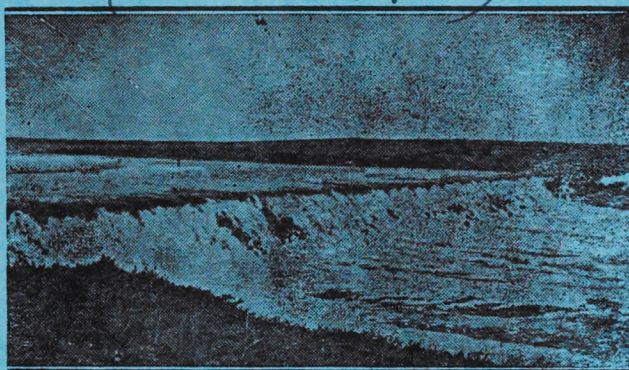
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# RED DEER RIVER IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT

(No. 3 Booklet)



"Every drop of water that runs to the sea without rendering a commercial return is a public waste."—Herbert Hoover

EAST CENTRAL IRRIGATION  
ASSOCIATION



# EAST CENTRAL IRRIGATION ASSOCIATION

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## A NATIONAL ASSET —

Canada has a national asset which has heretofore been entirely undeveloped. This is the Red Deer River which crosses the entire Province of Alberta without a single dam, irrigation canal or power turbine to prevent its waters flowing uselessly to the sea. This waste is tragic, especially since for over 150 miles, the river flows through what was once a rich farming country but is now largely depopulated due to lack of water. The solution is to dam the Red Deer River just west of Stettler, Alberta and by a gravity canal store the flood waters in natural reservoirs south of Federal and Coronation, where this water can be used to irrigate 478,000 acres now selected and further areas up to a total of 900,000 acres. These irrigable acres commence immediately east of Hanna and extend 70 miles southwest to the Red Deer and south and south-east of Coronation to Sounding Creek and beyond it to Acadia Valley.

This development of the Red Deer River has already been surveyed by the engineers of the P.F.R.A., acting under the Dominion Department of Agriculture. A permit has been granted by the Province of Alberta to divert 750,000 acre feet per year from this river for irrigation purposes. The surveys have been advanced to a point where construction could be commenced now.

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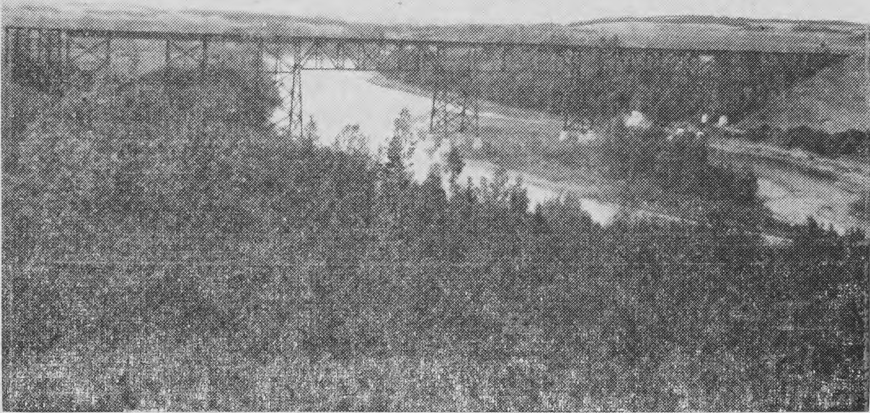
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**PHONE 52**

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**THE HANNA HERALD**





**PROPOSED DAM SITE** — This is the site of the proposed Red Deer River Diversion Dam at Ardley. The structure in the centre of the picture is the C.N.R. bridge.

## **COST WILL BE LOW —**

The cost of this project will be low. This is due to the fact that the water can be placed in the main canal without pumping, will be stored in natural reservoirs and then carried, first through natural channels and then as the scheme develops through canals to the drought areas of East Central Alberta.

A late engineering report on this project shows an estimated cost as follows:

Clearwater Diversion .....	500,000.00
Red Deer River Dam & Reservoir .....	8,227,500.00
Main Canal .....	7,568,850.00
Reservoirs & Connecting Canals .....	4,414,875.00
Contingencies .....	4,289,775.00
Total	25,000,000.00

The cost of the distribution system has been estimated at 500,000 acres at \$25 or a total of \$12,500,000.00.

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## SOIL ANALYSIS MADE —

Soil analysis have been made and long term experiments to ascertain the response of the soil to irrigation are now in progress. Until these have been completed we have available to guide us the combined experience of the farmers who have cropped this land over the past 40 years and found it highly productive whenever sufficient moisture was available. Irrigation applied by individuals to their own farms throughout this period has demonstrated without question that these lands respond successfully to water.

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The F.U.A. is a farmers' organization always keenly alive to all problems affecting our rural people, has been actively urging more efficient use of our water resources for many years. Has strongly advocated immediate action on the Red Deer Diversion Project. Also joint provincial and federal action in setting up a Great Plains Water Authority to the end that we have unity and coordinated action on all questions of water use and conservation. Won't you come in with us to build up a bigger and better Farmers' Organization?

### **HUTTON'S GARAGE**

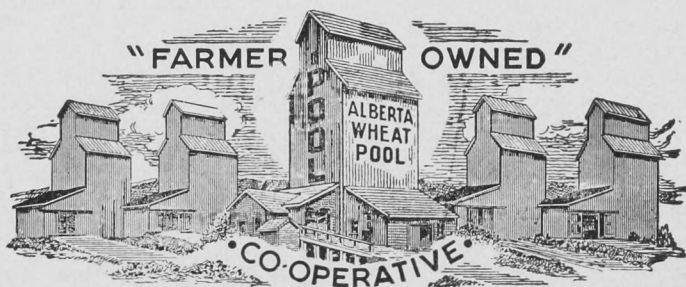
DODGE - DESOTO CARS — MINNEAPOLIS  
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The Alberta Wheat Pool is wholeheartedly behind the East Central Irrigation Association in its endeavours to hasten the construction of an irrigation system which would provide for the establishment of a sound basis for agriculture on a large area of fertile land.





## POSSIBILITIES FOR SETTLEMENT —

In "Possibilities for settlement on Irrigated Lands in Alberta" as presented to the Soils Group of the Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturalists at the Annual Meeting at Olds June 18-19, 1942 A. E. Palmer, Acting Superintendent of Dominion Experimental Station, Lethbridge, establishes the average irrigable farm to be 120 acres per family. On this basis the present project would support 7,500 families or a direct farm population of 37,500. This is in contrast to the 750 families now eking out a living in this area. Mr. Palmer also estimates the actual farm population to be only two-fifths of the population supported by the irrigated lands in Alberta. It would therefore follow that the project is capable of supplying a livelihood for a population of 93,750 people.

## POWER —

It will make possible the future development of an immense hydro electric power project by providing the works around which such project may be built. The dam on the Red Deer River will store water to a height of approximately 180 feet. From this dam, water could be diverted into Buffalo Lake for storage for river control and power. Approximately one and a half million acre-feet can be stored in the lake and fed back into the Red Deer River. To provide this volume of water, it would be necessary to divert other streams in to the Red Deer near its source. This will ensure not only a constant supply of summer and winter water but also a continuous supply of winter electric power. The power development will be one of the largest and most attractive in Western Canada.

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The main canal and tributaries to be used will supply a constant flow of water to approximately 1200 miles of dry creek channels, traversing an area containing 5 million acres of range land. This will materially increase the livestock carrying capacity of these lands and will give a constant supply of water to existing dams, as well as dams which will be constructed along the various water courses.

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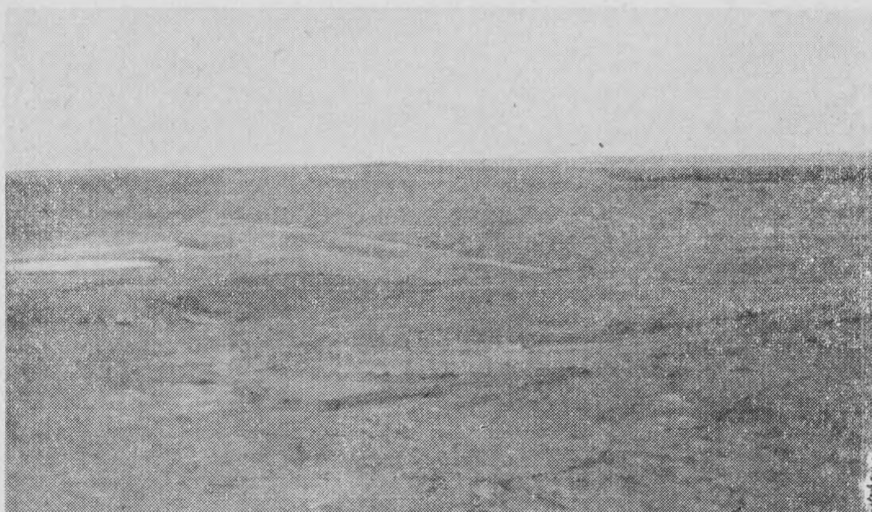
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BERRY CREEK DAM — A P.F.R.A. project completed in 1948. This dam will hold five billion gallons of water for irrigation and stock-watering. Length 1500 feet, height 55 feet.

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## NORMAL FLOW OF RIVER PROTECTED —

Buffalo Lake insofar as its present proposed use is concerned can be raised to its full supply level and be used as storage to feed water back into the Red Deer River by controlled flow to ensure to users of water below the dam on the Red Deer River an adequate and constant flow. The waste caused by annual floods would be reduced and the waters impounded to be fed back later to provide both power and irrigation.

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EARLY HOMESTEADER — The man in the above photo is none other than Jas. Cameron, president of the association. The photo was taken in 1910 and shows the "unique" motive power in those days.

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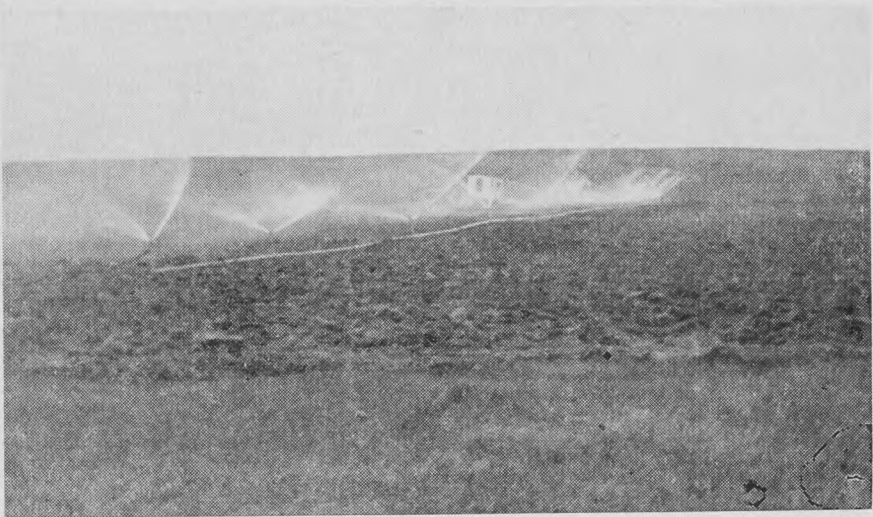
The livestock industry when assured permanence of summer water and winter feed will readily increase. The carrying capacity of these dry range lands is now averaging one head of stock per 40 acres. The same lands watered will carry five times as much stock. Irrigation authorities maintain that every irrigated acre stabilizes and supplements 4 acres of dry lands or nearby range land by providing sure supplies of feed for livestock and preventing sacrificing herds of stock, so frequently seen during the past thirty years on our western plains, due to lack of feed. The area would then be stabilized and a great feeder industry made possible.

Irrigation farming ensures and permits the growing of diversified crops. With the high grade soil in this area, abundance of alfalfa and other fodder crops, beans, peas, sugar beets, flax and coarse grains, can be produced in the whole of the area because in addition to the very productive soil, over the whole of the plateau there are ideal climatic conditions both as to heat and long hours of sunshine during the whole of the growing season.



**ANOTHER DAM SITE** — This is another view of the site for the proposed Red Deer River Diversion Dam at Ardley. Taken from the top of the river banks that is the Red Deer flowing through the centre.





**SPRINKLER IRRIGATION** — This method of irrigation was employed in P.F.R.A. and Special Areas experiments at plots near Carolside.

## PRESENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA —

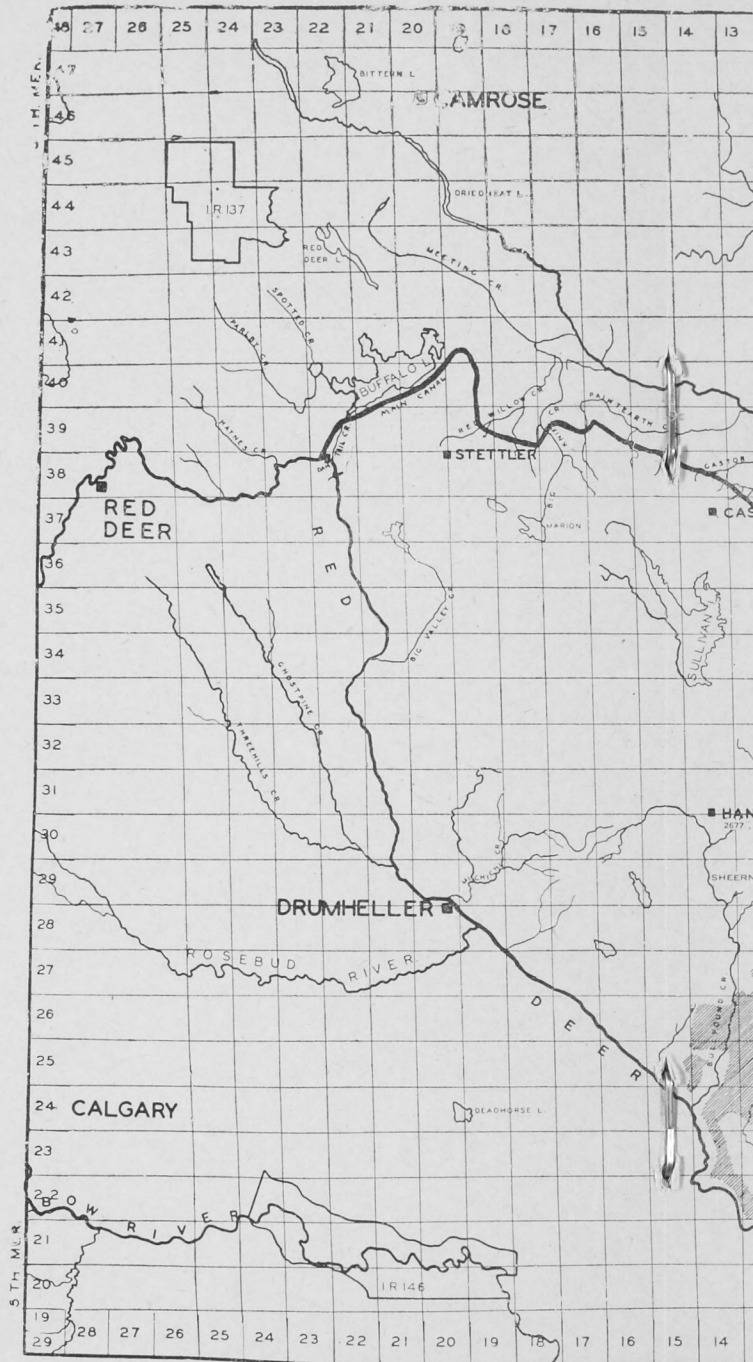
Adequate transportation services are provided in this area by the Canadian National and the Canadian Pacific Railways. The Goose Lake Line of the C.N.R. from Calgary to Saskatoon provides an artery of transportation for the central and southern sections. The C.P.R. branch from Lacombe, Alberta east serves all the northern part of the area. In addition to these two main lines there is the Hanna to Warden branch of the C.N.R. and the Hanna to Medicine Hat line of the C.N.R., the latter completed from Hanna south to as far as Wardlow on the Red Deer River; the C.N.R. line from Scapa east to Loverna and a point line of the C.N.R. and the C.P.R. from Youngstown to Coronation. Facilities for motor transportation are also good. There are two main highways, east and west, and two highways north and south, together with secondary highways or market roads which have been built up through the years by the Municipal authorities. These facilities along with adequate telephone lines are awaiting increased settlement and the settler will not have to pioneer, enduring the hardships and loneliness ordinarily incident to new communities.

The territory has now established in it seven up to date hospitals, as well as schools, churches, a judicial centre and all the advantages of old settled communities.

### **SILVER CLEANERS**

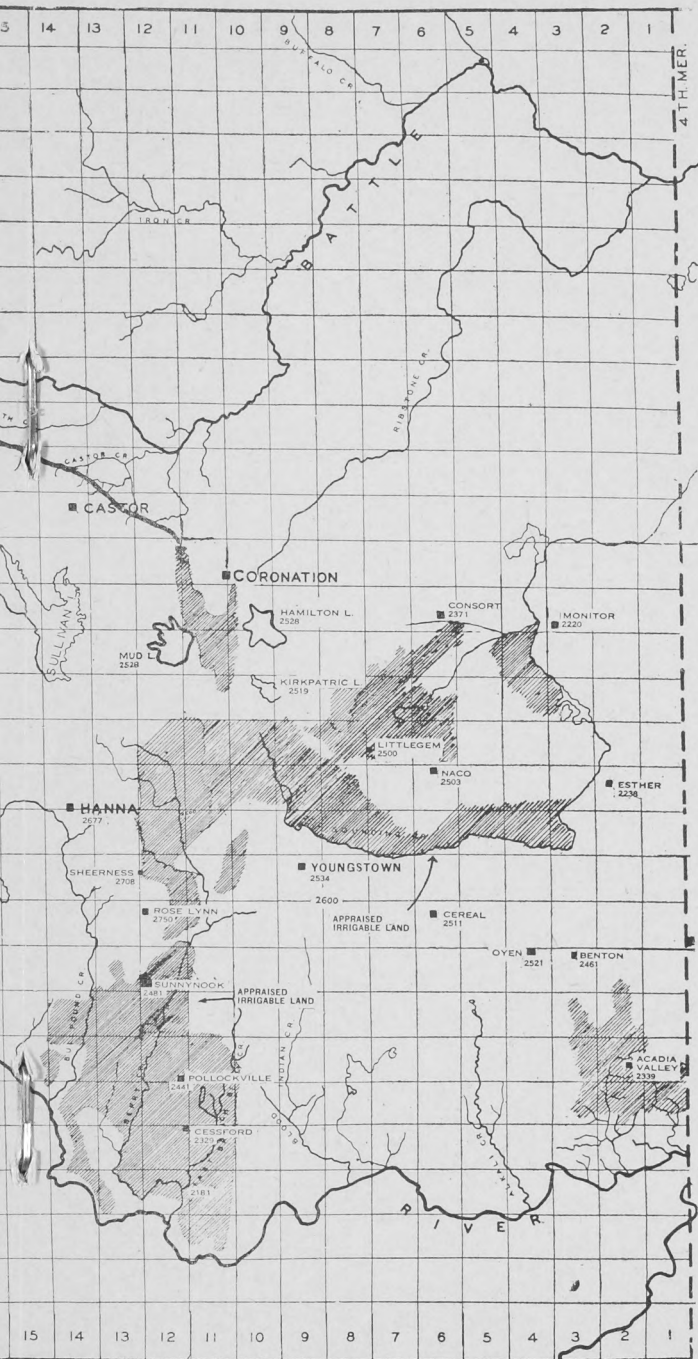
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# RED DEER RIVER DE



Gross acreage that can be irrigated shown on shaded portion of map. Scale: 500,000 acres.

# WER DEVELOPMENT



ed portions of above map amounts to approximately 000 acres.



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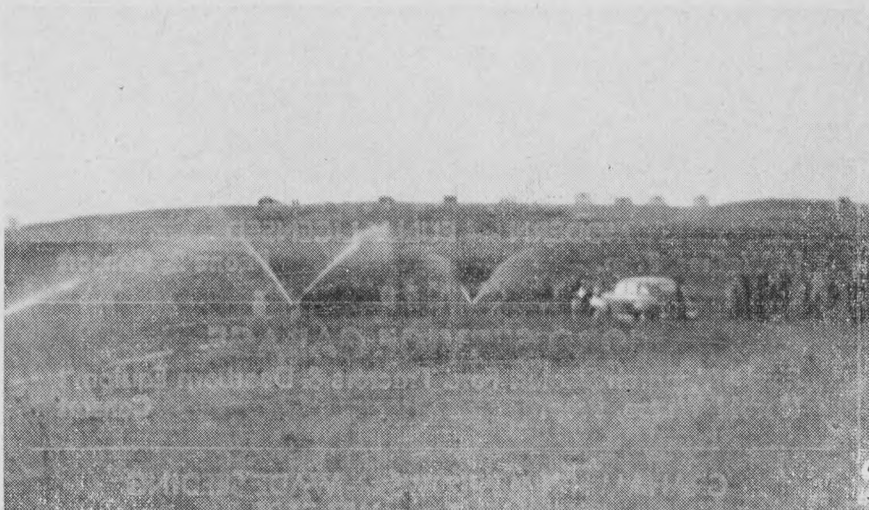
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**SPRINKLER IRRIGATION** — This is a photo of a sprinkler system in operation. Using water stored from dugouts or dams, the sprinkler system entails the use of pressure pumps.

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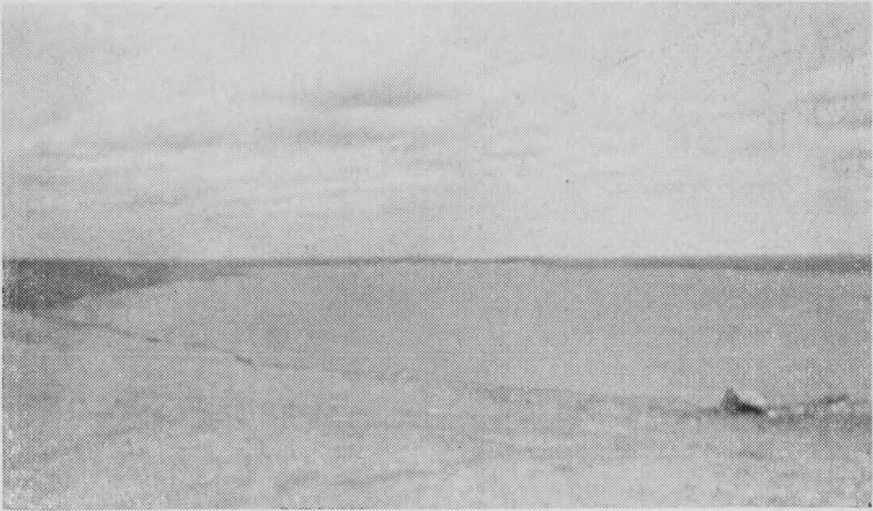
CORONATION, ALBERTA

We heartily join with Coronation business men in support of irrigation, believing that it is the first step in a prosperous agriculture for this particular area.

B. PURDUE, Mgr.

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BERRY CREEK DAM JUNE 1951 — Another view of this structure on the Berry Creek after the reservoir filled with the spring and summer run off. This dam has gained prominence as a recreation spot.

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**GROWTH WITH WATER** — A field of oats is seen in the above photo. The height of the grain denotes that ample moisture has been applied through irrigation and the results are obvious.

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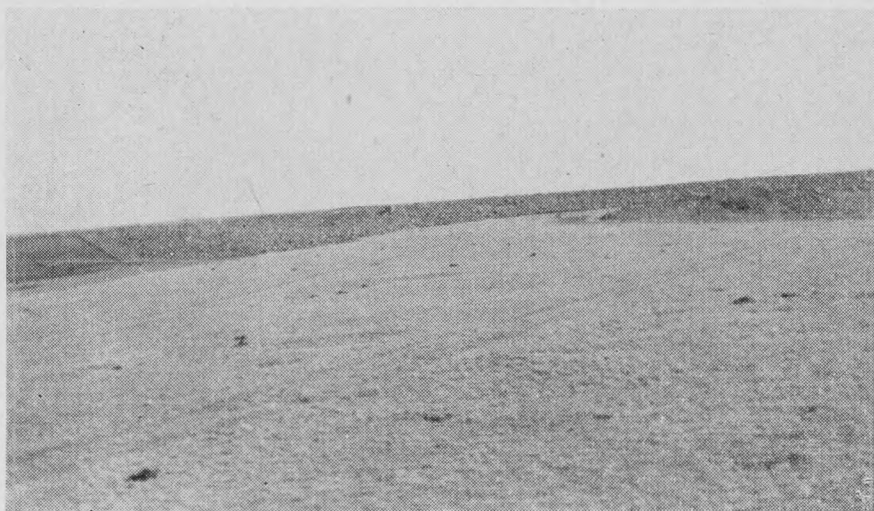
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**EAST BERRY CREEK DAM** — Impounding the waters of the East Berry Creek. This structure is 1,000 feet long and 25 feet high. It too offers a large reservoir of water for stock and irrigation purposes.

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## INTERMEDIATE PROJECTS —

Your Association has co-operated with the P.F.R.A. in having established in this area a number of intermediate projects built with a view to tying in with the main project when constructed:

Berry Creek Dam - 1948	8,000 irrigable acres
Cost \$158,000.00. Capacity 20,000 acre ft.	
Dead Fish Creek Dam at Cessford - 1949	4,000 irrigable acres
Cost \$47,832.00. Capacity 5,000 acre feet.	
Loveland Dam - 1954	
Cost \$15,000.00. Capacity 6,000 acre ft.	
East Berry Creek Dam - 1949	1,500 irrigable acres
Cost \$9,677.00. Capacity 1,000 acre ft.	
Sounding Creek Dam - 1949	8,000 irrigable acres
Cost \$51,988.00. Storage capacity 5,600.	
Loyalist Creek Dam - 1950	2,000 irrigable acres
Cost \$14,993.00. Capacity 1,400 acre ft.	

That these lands cannot produce on the present rainfall has been abundantly proven. A Government station at one of the average points in the area during the months April to September, for the years 1933 to 1944 inclusive shows the rainfall was as follows:

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
April	.46	.17	.43	.41	.29	.67	.20	2.00	.24	.51	.17
May	1.75	1.47	2.93	2.04	.95	2.92	2.70	1.18	2.54	1.05	1.38
June	1.06	2.56	2.97	1.29	1.22	2.07	5.75	1.98	1.44	4.98	1.82
July	.42	.18	1.61	.39	2.03	3.06	1.65	3.79	1.49	4.08	.72
Aug.	1.63	.39	2.13	1.96	1.85	2.79		.63	1.49	2.04	2.53
Sept.	.83	1.46	.24	.77	1.31	1.14		1.41	2.04	1.25	.24

Despite this scant rainfall, the fertility of the soil was apparent from the ample crops raised in any year from the precipitation even slightly exceeded the minimum.

### HANNA CO-OPERATIVE ASS'N LTD.

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## IN CONCLUSION —

That development of irrigation from the water of the Red Deer River will benefit areas far removed from the district itself is well expressed in an editorial of the Edmonton Journal dealing with the Red Deer River project:

"Urban dwellers often fail to appreciate the truth that "all things are purchased with food" to quote Dr. W. C. Lowdermilk, assistant soils chief of the United States and a recent visitor in Edmonton. Where food supplies fail all else dies and history has shown that when that happens, population dwindles, even moves away in mass migrations.

"Irrigation is one of the methods used to store in the soil, rains which have been saved in natural or artificial lakes. Restoring fertility to soil by irrigation and farming methods suited to irrigated lands pays off in the long run.

The money needed to carry through projects such as the Red Deer River irrigation scheme is contributed by all of us, through taxation. Fifteen hundred families may be the first and direct beneficiaries but then the townsfolk in the revived area prosper also and finally the whole community is the gainer.

"Thus hundreds of thousands more than those who live in Hanna, or Coronation, or Youngstown, or Acadia Valley will hope that the Federal and Provincial Governments will be able to settle without delay any questions of responsibility or rights and will be able to get on with the big job of moisture conservation on the prairies."

Irrigation will supplement the present ranching economy by providing sure supplies of water, feed and pasture.

(Edmonton Journal, December 20th, 1945.)



## A RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT

The people of the Acadia country have a proud record in the building of the co-operative movement in general and in the development of co-operative organizations in their own area to serve themselves.

We feel sure that the efforts which are being made by the East Central Irrigation Association will be equally as successful in bringing irrigation to the district.

We join in wishing you every success in your endeavors.

**U. F. A. CO-OP LTD.**

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<b>Grand Hotel</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Edmonton</b>	<b>Cecil Hotel</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Medicine Hat</b>	<b>Sylvan Lake Hotel</b> and Dining Room <b>Sylvan Lake</b>	<b>Newell Hotel</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Brooks</b>
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<b>Union Hotel</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Athabaska</b>	<b>National Hotel</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Hanna</b>	<b>Buffalo Hotel</b> Coffee Shop and Banquet Room <b>Red Deer</b>	<b>Alberta Hotel</b> and Dining Room <b>Vegreville</b>
<b>Dominion Hotel</b> Opposite Palliser <b>Calgary</b>	<b>Lacombe Hotel</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Lacombe</b>	<b>Park Hotel</b> Coffee Shop and Banquet Room <b>Red Deer</b>	<b>Grand Union</b> and Coffee Shop <b>Coleman</b>